



SD-STARS to stop loading local assessments

Since 2014-15, the SD-STARS team has been loading local assessment data into SD-STARS when districts grant permission to do so. A district's local assessment data is then made available to users in a set of SD-STARS reports. Money to load local assessments was originally supported by grant funds but has since moved to state funds.

Due to shifting needs and priorities, the SD-STARS team has decided to stop loading local assessment data for AIMSweb and DIBELS into the SD-STARS system. We will also stop pursuing work to load NWEA MAP data and will decline any work with STAR Renaissance. Several factors prompted this decision:

Frequent changes

Local assessments change frequently. For example, since 2014-15, Pearson released two new versions of AIMSweb (AIMSweb 2.0 and aimswebPlus). In the case of DIBELS, two vendors (DIBELS.net and University of Oregon) settled a lawsuit regarding use of the DIBELS assessment. It's our understanding that because of this settlement, DIBELS.net will change its name to Acadience Learning, and the two vendors will use slightly different DIBELS tests. With each change, the department must invest in

enhancements to the data load process and to SD-STARS reports and seek outside experts or learn ourselves how updated assessments differ from previous versions.

Under-utilized resource

There is not clear evidence that districts benefit from the inclusion of local assessment data in SD-STARS. In 2015-16, users accessed local assessment reports 449 times. In 2017-18, users accessed the reports 301 times, a 33 percent drop. From July-December 2018, users accessed the reports only 79 times. When we rank reports by the number of times users access them, local assessment reports frequently rank near the bottom. Low report usage indicates to us that districts are not finding a benefit to having local assessment data in SD-STARS.

Interest shifts over time

Districts' interest in local assessments varies. When we started loading local assessments into SD-STARS, the department informally surveyed districts' local assessment use, which led us to start with DIBELS and AIMSweb. Since that time, the number of districts that granted access to AIMSweb data dropped from 18 in 2014-15 to five in 2018-19. Some districts

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New data loaded into SD-STARS

The SDDOE receives a file from ACT five times a year. The most recent file, which contains ACT results from Sept. - Dec. 2018, has been loaded into SD-STARS. Users can access these updated ACT results in the ACT Spotlight Report (AS.002.01-A).

Additionally, the 2018-19 Fall Enrollment Census Count is now in SD-STARS. The Fall Enrollment Census Count is done every year and posted online at <https://doe.sd.gov/ofm/enrollment.aspx>. These counts are also found in SD-STARS through two reports:

- Fall Enrollment Census Count – Student (EN.007.00-A)
- Fall Enrollment Census Count – Aggregate (EN.007.00-X)

The Census Count reflects the number of students enrolled on the last Friday in September. It is a snapshot of data, so the numbers will not change. The Fall Enrollment Census Count will not match the State Aid calculations, since each follows a different set of business rules.

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About Us

South Dakota STARS Connections is a bi-monthly publication for South Dakota administrators and teachers, produced by the South Dakota Department of Education. This publication is intended to communicate news and events regarding the South Dakota Student Teacher Accountability and Reporting System (SD-STARS), our State-wide Longitudinal Data System. To view an online edition of this newsletter, go to doe.sd.gov/publications.aspx. Email story ideas or questions to STARSHelp@state.sd.us

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Data use course: Quick Facts

The time is drawing near for an opportunity to learn more about data analysis, all while earning a grad credit through USD! Following are some questions and answers about this summer's offering:

Q: Who should attend this course?

A: School and district administrators and educators interested in analyzing student data.

Q: What is this course?

A: Fundamentals of Using Data for Educators, a one-credit grad course offered through the University of South Dakota and South Dakota Department of Education. Although SD-STARS examples will be introduced, this course is appropriate for educators who use other systems as well.

Q: Why should I take this course?

A: Understanding and using data assists educators in making decisions to foster powerful improvements in student outcomes. Effective use of data supports student learning and success. This course will provide educators with the skills they need to use data to answer important questions to drive positive change in their district, school or classroom.

Q: Do I need a textbook?

A: Participants do not need to purchase a textbook or other material for this course. However, participants should bring a laptop that is able to browse the internet. Spreadsheet software such as Excel is helpful to finish the project.

Q: Are there further requirements?

A: Participants may choose one of three locations. On-site days will be from 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. local time. Participants who wish to earn a graduate credit are expected to attend the entire day of the on-site portion of the course and to complete a final project. They will be given a week past the workshop date to finish the project.

Q: Is there a cost?

A: Participation is free. One (1) grad credit is available through USD at a discounted rate. Information on USD registration/payment will be available at the workshop locations. Those who sign up for credit through USD will receive an A-F grade after all due dates have passed.



Course information and registration

Fundamentals of Using Data for Educators: Rapid City

Thursday, June 13: Western Dakota Technical Institute, Pennington Co. Community Rm (Library)

Registration:

<https://southdakota.gosignmeup.com/public/Course/browse?courseid=12526>

Fundamentals of Using Data for Educators: Watertown

Tuesday, June 18: Lake Area Tech. Institute, Student Learning Ctr, Level 4

Registration:

<https://southdakota.gosignmeup.com/public/Course/browse?courseid=12527>

Fundamentals of Using Data for Educators: Mitchell

Wednesday, June 19: Mitchell Career & Technical Education Academy (MCTEA), Training Center

Registration:

<https://southdakota.gosignmeup.com/public/Course/browse?courseid=12528>

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are moving to assessments like NWEA MAP, STAR Renaissance, FastBridge, and others. Anticipating such shifts and making needed adjustments is difficult. Loading each local assessment requires a time investment – to load data, display it in reports, and gain expertise to understand and display that data effectively.

Expanding workload

The work of the SD-STARS team continues to expand, now including things like identifying

students for proactive admissions and loading postsecondary information from the National Student Clearinghouse. In the future, the SD-STARS team will begin assisting with new federal requirements for Perkins reporting, possible changes to state assessments, and expanding data elements for the report card.

Conclusion

This has been a difficult decision, and the department recognizes this may be disappointing news,

but we hope districts will understand. We will continue to load AIMSweb and DIBELS for the 2018-19 school year (fall/winter scores currently available, spring scores available in May), and we will leave reports available to users until December 2019. We will not load AIMSweb and DIBELS scores for the 2019-20 school year. Contact STARSHelp@state.sd.us with questions or concerns.



Ask the Experts

Can users see which students receive free/reduced lunch in SD-STARS?

When SD-STARS started in 2012, we did have an indicator called “economically disadvantaged” (ED) in some reports. A Y for yes or N for no indicated whether that student received free or reduced-price lunch. However, when SD-STARS was rolled out, some districts expressed concern about this data. As a result, we removed the ED indicator in 2013 from all student-level STARS reports. The ED indicator is still available in some aggregate reports, but it is not on any student-level report. The one exception is the Accountability Report Card. Since ED is a subgroup for the report card, the ED indicator at a student-level is available in the report card rosters.

When will Smarter Balanced data be available in SD-STARS?

Smarter Balanced results should be available in July in SD-STARS. At that time, users will be able to access the data in SD-STARS through reports located under the “Reports” tab. The reports located under the “Assessment” category will display the newest results.

No newsletter in June

The STARS Connection Newsletter is taking a hiatus this summer. We will be back with a new edition in August!

State offices closed

The SD-STARS team will not be available on the following days, due to state offices being closed for the Easter holiday:

- **Friday, April 19**
- **Monday, April 22**

We will be in the office to answer questions and assist users April 15-18 and April 23-26.

Help Desk

SD-STARS staff are a great resource. We want to support users in your district. Let us know your questions, comments and concerns by emailing us at STARSHelp@state.sd.us. We are happy to help!

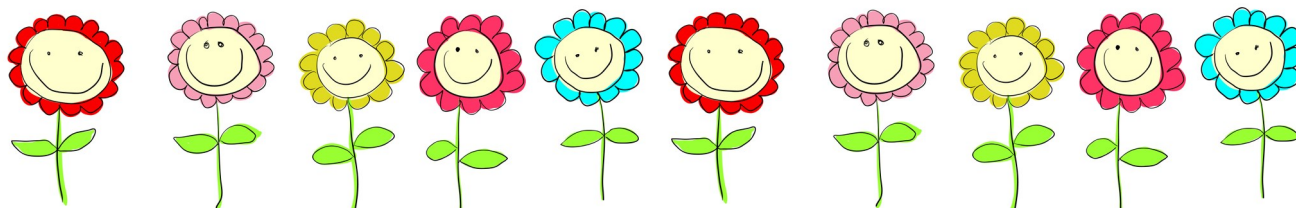
Upcoming webinar to explore reports

Want to learn more about SD-STARS but have limited time? Looking for SD-STARS information about a specific topic? Check out an SD-STARS topical webinar! Our team offers webinars on relevant topics throughout the school year. Through these webinars, participants have enjoyed learning about attendance reports, the Accountability Report Card, data analysis tips, dual credit reports and more. These webinars are recorded, with links available in the Training Center menu in SD-STARS.

Date: Wednesday, April 24, from 2:00 - 3:00 p.m. CDT.

Topic: SD-STARS reports related to Mobility, Fall Enrollment and McKinney-Vento

Registration: <https://southdakota.gosignmeup.com/public/Course/browse?courseid=12535>



U.S. DOE acts on school safety report recommendation to improve understanding of student privacy law

The U.S. Department of Education has released a comprehensive set of frequently asked questions (FAQs) on schools' and districts' responsibilities under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) in the context of school safety.

The Federal Commission on School Safety (FCSS) released an in-depth [report](#) last December, which observed that "substantial misunderstanding remains at the local level among officials and educators concerning (FERPA), and in particular its application to school-based threats."

This FAQ document, titled, [School Resource Officers, School Law Enforcement Units and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#), consolidates previously issued guidance and technical assistance into a single resource to help raise schools' and districts' awareness of these provisions.

"One key takeaway from the commission's work was that the federal government needs to do a much better job of providing useable information that's simple, streamlined and clear," said

Secretary DeVos in a press release. "FERPA is an area where widespread confusion remains, and this clarification will give local school leaders and law enforcement the tools they need to protect student privacy while ensuring the health and safety of students and others in the school community."

The document consists of 37 commonly asked questions about schools' and school districts' responsibilities under FERPA relating to disclosures of student information to school resource officers (SROs), law enforcement units and others, and seeks to explain and clarify how FERPA protects student privacy while ensuring the health and safety of students and others in the school community.

The FAQ document includes answers to common FERPA questions involving school safety, such as:

- Can law enforcement unit officials who are off-duty police officers or SROs be considered school officials under FERPA and, therefore,

have access to students' education records?

- Does FERPA permit schools and districts to disclose education records, without consent, to outside law enforcement officials who serve on a school's threat assessment team?
- When is it permissible for schools or districts to disclose student education records under FERPA's health or safety emergency exception?
- Does FERPA permit school officials to release information that they personally observed or of which they have personal knowledge?

The full FAQ document can be found at <https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/resources/school-resource-officers-school-law-enforcement-units-and-ferpa>.

For additional information on the meetings, field visits, listening sessions, roundtables and other resources used to produce the FCSS report, please visit the U.S. Department of Education's school safety website at <https://www.ed.gov/school-safety>.

SD BIT tips and resource on phishing

Phishing is the practice of sending fraudulent emails claiming to be from trustworthy parties to persuade individuals to reveal personal information, such as passwords and credit card numbers. School districts are frequent victims of phishing attempts. Last month, this newsletter highlighted a successful phishing attack against the San Diego School District that resulted in the release of personal information on students and teachers.

Recently, the South Dakota Bureau of Information and Telecommunications published a website with information on the dangers of phishing. The website contains examples of what a phishing email may look like, what to be aware of for phishing attachments, and how to look out for phishing links. At the bottom of the website is a phishing

simulator. This allows users to practice their skills at being able to spot phishing attempts.

Here are some tips to help avoid being phished:

- Slow down when looking through email. This helps you avoid clicking on something by accident.
- Read the email thoroughly and remember to look for clues. If the email address does not seem correct or you were not expecting the email, the email may be a phishing attempt.
- Never open attachments or click on links without verifying the message is legitimate.

Check out the website and try your hand at detecting fraudulent emails at <https://phishing.sd.gov/>.

STARS Certified Trainers

STARS Certified Trainers have been trained by Department of Education staff on SD-STARS and are kept up-to-date on system developments and new reports. Districts can contact trainers to request training at the district's cost.

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Workshop for new STARS Certified Trainers

During the past year, six individuals served as STARS Certified Trainers. These individuals received regular training and updates on SD-STARS to better support their work with districts. Several SCTs served to support schools and districts throughout South Dakota. Although they typically did not provide SD-STARS-specific training to schools and districts, they were better equipped to use SD-STARS to supplement the work they were already doing.

The SD-STARS team is searching for more SCTs for the

2019-20 school year. The new SCT group will convene for the first time during a summer workshop, to be held in Pierre (date TBD). There are two main requirements to become a new STARS Certified Trainer: attend the summer workshop and participate in monthly update calls on SD-STARS. SCTs receive access to resources about SD-STARS and additional support from the SD-STARS staff. If you or someone you know works with multiple districts and are interested in more information on becoming an SCT, email STARSHelp@state.sd.us.



SAM Corner: End-of-year preparation

Now is a great time for STARS Account Managers to review the accounts in SD-STARS to ensure that every account has the appropriate access and security. Here are some tips and things to look for.

Automatic accounts through Infinite Campus

To avoid having to enter and maintain staff in SD-STARS, information from Infinite Campus can be used to automatically manage SD-STARS accounts. As long as the email address, employment record and district assignments with job titles are entered correctly in IC, accounts in SD-STARS will be automatically created, maintained and ended.

District Access Tracker and staff changes

SD-STARS provides the "OT.008.01-S – District Access Tracker" report for STARS Account Managers to track all district users. This is a great place to double check all district users in the list. With some staff members leaving a district, others entering and still others simply moving from one role to another within a district, it is important to maintain secure accounts. When a staff change happens and accounts are automated through Infinite Campus, these changes are easy to update in SD-STARS.

For individuals leaving the district, entering the end date on the employment record and assignments in Infinite Campus will remove access to SD-STARS once this date passes.

If someone changes jobs within the district, enter

an end date on the old assignment and create a new assignment for the new position in Infinite Campus. This will allow the individual's account to seamlessly flow from the access needed for the old position to that needed for the new one in SD-STARS.

For new staff, information can be added to Infinite Campus anytime. Once the start date passes, SD-STARS will use the email address, district employment record and district assignment with job title to create an account that will be waiting for approval at the beginning of the school year.

Org Role Updater report

SD-STARS provides the necessary access to every person by using the job titles found on district assignments in Infinite Campus. SD-STARS provides the "OT.002.00-S – STARS Security – Org Role Updater" report, which tracks what access is given to each job title. Email STARSHelp@state.sd.us if you have questions about the Org Role Updater report or wish to change the access on any job title. Once SD-STARS staff changes a job title's access, the change is live within 30 minutes.

Year End Sign Off and accountability permissions

Districts will soon receive communication from the South

Dakota Department of Education regarding the Year End Sign Off memo and document. This signoff document is to ensure that all school districts have completed the necessary end-of-year tasks so that calculations used for the Accountability Report Card, federal reporting and more can be determined and reported in an accurate and timely manner.

One of the tasks in the sign off is for SAMs. It asks SAMs to make sure that all district staff who are part of the district's Accountability Team have access to the report card by June 14. This means that SAMS have assigned the accountability permissions to these district staff. Directions on how to assign the accountability permissions will be sent with the Year End Sign Off information and are also available in the Training Center in SD-STARS.

Resources and help available

Many resources are located in the SD-STARS Training Center to assist SAMs. These include webinar recordings, the SD-STARS Manual, a SAM training series and useful tutorials.

Sometimes problems occur during the end-of-year preparation process. If you have any questions, please email the SD-STARS team at STARSHelp@state.sd.us.

Year-end signoff (SD-STARS section)

Mark when completed	Report Card Access – SD-STARS System (This section should be reviewed and completed by the District's SD-STARS Account Manager.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	SD-STARS accounts have been established for all district staff who are part of the district's Accountability Team by June 14, 2019 . NOTE: All 2018-19 Accountability/SPI Reports will be delivered to districts via SD-STARS and therefore your Accountability Team must have access. If you have any questions, email the SD-STARS team at STARSHelp@state.sd.us
Signature of the District's SD-STARS Account Manager	
Date Signed:	